

LET GOD BE GOD! We hear these days, too many people claiming to be great. Be it in the political circle, be it in the social circle or even in the spiritual circle, people who claimed to be the greatest have fallen head long on the floor and sad was their end. Just look around, the modern world has witnessed too many of such characters in self-glory and their downfall. As an exception, some of them toward the end of their tenure on earth have acknowledged that it is God who is the greatest and not themselves.

That's the simple message of today's first reading from the prophet Malachi: *A great king am I, says the Lord.* There's a dire warning to the priests: *Give glory to my name... or your blessing I will make a curse.* It seems it is from this very perspective that Jesus speaks out so aggressively in our Gospel, as he confronts the hypocrisy of the Pharisees. It is interesting to see that he doesn't question their authority, but warns them. Jesus does question and warn all of us to go beyond words of faith and to act on what we profess.

Whenever Jesus says *I am* in the Gospels, he is making a clear reference to the First Commandment of the Ten, and to his own divinity. Remember that First Commandment? *I am the Lord your God. You shall have no strange gods before me.* It's very easy to dismiss it as hopelessly out of step with the modern world.

We might say there's not a lot of idol worship going on in our culture, at least worship of carved images of strange deities. But we do have our idols in power, wealth, fame, pleasure, independence. The most insidious and widely embraced idol, though, is the image we see when we look in a mirror. There is something within us that in subtle ways struggles mightily with the notion of allowing God to be God: it's that determined sense that "nobody is going to tell me what to do."

So how do we let God be God; let God be the greatest? One way is through prayer, when we pray the Lord's Prayer and say "thy will be done." Repeatedly returning to a posture of humbly seeking and following the will of God, no matter how challenging, no matter how contrary to our own will, is the heart and soul of humbling ourselves as Jesus calls us to. It allows God to be God, humbly acknowledging that God is the greatest!

Fr. Michael



THIS IS NATIONAL VOCATION AWARENESS WEEK!

Did you know that in our country, compared to 50 years ago, there are 20,000 fewer priests, and 130,000 fewer religious sisters? During Vocation Awareness week, please pray that young people in today's increasingly more "secular" society, will hear and respond to God's call And don't forget to encourage vocations as priests, deacons, sisters, and religious!



Did you know? — The **CARMELITE AUXILIARY** exists to help our cloistered Carmelite sisters, at the Carmel of Maria Regina on Greenhill Road?? It is open to all women of the parish, and hold their meetings at **10:00am**, on the **2nd Monday** in the months of January, February, March, April, May, September, October, & November. *Come join us, and learn how we help our Carmelites!*

MARY INVITES US ALL — to draw near to her Son through meditations of the Rosary — Join **Eugene Catholic Young Adults** (ages 21-39, married or single) for the Rosary, followed by dinner, this Thursday, **6:45pm**, at St. Mary Church (in the St. Matthew classroom—Par. Ctr.). For inquiries: eugeneyoungadults@gmail.com or 541-270-9329 or [facebook.com/EugeneCYA](https://www.facebook.com/EugeneCYA).



SVDP TURKEY DRIVE IN MOTION! Please consider a donation of a turkey (or chicken or ham or game hens, etc.) for the Christmas Food Boxes, that will be distributed at St. Peter on Dec. 16th). The freezer is 'waiting' in the Religious Ed Building's hallway, so items can be brought to Mass, or to the office on Wednesdays & Fridays during office hours.

DON'T FORGET!

The **Holiday Bazaar & Turkey Dinner** at St. Mark is **November 11th** — Get some Christmas shopping done with all the vendors present, and also at the St. Mark tables! And forget about cooking Saturday dinner, because there's a turkey dinner waiting for you at the Bazaar!



FAITH SERIES: CATECHISM THROUGH THE YEAR

AND WHAT ABOUT EVOLUTION?

Are the opening chapters of Genesis a literal, scientific description of the world's creation? Or is their language more figurative, whose essential meaning points to fundamental truths about God and the world? Both have been a matter of debate since ancient times!

Perhaps the sharpest controversy over these passages has to do with human origins, usually focusing on the scientific theory of evolution. Some believe that Genesis, rightly understood, denies any possibility that human beings have descended, in some sense, from another species. Others, however, claim that such evolution is a proven scientific fact.

Catholic tradition provides a different perspective. Following the insights of St. Augustine and others, it allows that Genesis employs figurative language, so it cannot be cited as a scientific text, thereby ruling out human evolution altogether. At the same time, however, the "proven facts of science" accepted by one generation may be rejected by later generations, because of new evidence. So the Church warns scientists against presumption in their conclusions. She specifically rejects any scientific theories (such as that of Charles Darwin) which insists that evolution was the result of 'random' forces, rather than intelligent design of a personal Creator. Such pretentious claims move beyond the limited realm of inquiry that is possible to science.

Given divine revelation as a whole, the Church teaches that a few fundamental truths about human origins cannot be contradicted by scientific speculation:

1. The entire universe, including the human race, is not the result of chance, but of God's purposeful, loving design (Gn 1:1,31).
2. Human beings are not simply more advanced animals; they bear the image of god in a unique way (Gn 1:26-27)
3. Even if God created the bodies of the first humans through evolution, their souls, like all human souls, were immediately created by him at their conception (Gn 2:7)
4. All human beings share a single, historical ancestor, so they all have the same nature and origin, and belong to one human family (Acts 17:26).
5. The primordial fall from original holiness, of our first human parents, was a real event within time. It left them and their descendants with original sin (Rom 5:12-4,18-19).

RECOMMENDED READING: Excerpt taken from The NEW Catholic Answer Bible

Ps 139:13 • Lk 3:23-28 • 1 Cor 15:22,45 • Col 1:16 • Jas 1:18 • Rv 4:11

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